

Message Text

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52

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EUR-25 RSR-01 PM-09 NSC-10 SS-14 RSC-01

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 IO-12 NIC-01 OMB-01

ACDA-19 PRS-01 GAC-01 /124 W
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R 291029 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 672

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY ROME

S E C R E T MOGADISCIO 0434

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR MILI SO ET KE

SUBJ: POSSIBLE INSURGENCY IN THE OGADEN

REF: MOGADISCIO 411

1. IN DISCUSSION MARCH 24 AND 27, ITALIAN MILATT HAD SOME INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS ON ETHIOPIAN DEFENSE PLANNING TO SUPPLEMENT REFTEL REPORT.
2. ON BASIS HIS RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH IEG MILITARY IN ADDIS, HE THOUGHT ETHIOPIANS WERE PRIMARILY CONCERNED BY LIKE-LIHOOD OF SOMALI NON- CONVENTIONAL INSURGENCY- TYPE OPERATION IN OGADEN. HOWEVER, ETHIOPIANS WERE NOT RULING OUT SURPRISE SWEEP INTO OGADEN BY SOMALI MILITARY WHO WOULD THEN QUICKLY ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN IEG MILITARY RETALIATION (FOR WHICH THEY UNPREPARED) BY CALLING FOR CEASE- FIRE AND OAU OR OTHER DIPLOMATIC MEDIATION. MILATT SAID ALTHOUGH HE PERSONALLY CONVINCED SOMALIS HAD NO INTENTION OF RESORTING TO OFFENSIVE MILITARY ACTION AGAINST ETHIOPIANS, HE THOUGHT IT JUST POSSIBLE THAT SOMALIS CAPABLE OF MOVING TANKS SOME DISTANCE INTO OGADEN AS ONE- TIME THRUST.
3. ON OTHER HAND, HE FELT ETHIOPIANS WERE MAKING A GREAT

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DEAL OF TROUBLE FOR THEMSELVES BY REINFORCING THEIR MILITARY UNITS IN OGADEN. HE CITED PRIMITIVE BUSH CONDITIONS WHICH MADE IT MOST DIFFICULT ESTABLISH AND SUPPLY NEW MILITARY UNITS WITHOUT ENGENDERING MORE ILL WILL FROM SOMALI RESIDENTS IN OGADEN. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE WERE ONLY SO MANY WELLS AND THEIR CAPACITY WAS LIMITED. IF ETHIOPIAN UNITS MOVED IN AND TOOK OVER SCARCE WATER SUPPLY, LOCAL INHABITANTS WOULD BE FURIOUS; ARMED RESISTANCE COULD EASILY OCCUR WITHOUT INSTIGATION OR COORDINATION BY GSDR. COMMENT: WE THINK THIS IS IMPORTANT POINT. THERE RECENT SFR REPORT THAT ETHIOPIANS INTEND TO UTILIZE CONVENTIONAL FORCES TO CONTAIN ANY RISE IN INSURGENCY IN OGADEN. GSDR LEADERS HAVE TOLD US OF PRESSURES THEY RECEIVING FROM SOMALIS IN OGADEN WHO CLAIM THAT THEY ARE BEING GIVEN EXTREMELY ROUGH TIME BY IEG AUTHORITIES (MOG 0397). IN WAKE OF INCREASED ETHIOPIAN MILITARY PRESENCE DEEPER IN OGADEN, COMPLAINTS BY SOMALI TRIBESMEN OVER REAL OR IMAGINED DIFFICULTIES IN ACCESS TO WATER, FOOD, ETC. LIKELY TO INCREASE. LOORAM

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** SECRET

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973MOGADI00434
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: MOGADISHU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730342/aaaailzv.tel
Line Count: 86
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 MOGADISCIO 411
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17-Sep-2001 by shawdg>; APPROVED <16-Nov-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> srp 980108
Subject: POSSIBLE INSURGENCY IN THE OGADEN
TAGS: MILI, PBOR, ET, KE, SO
To: AF
SECSTATE WASHDC INFO ADDIS ABABA
NAIROBI
ROME
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005